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[REDACTED]  
13 February 1975  
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, COMIREX

SUBJECT: COMIREX Comments on Cyprus  
Post-Mortem Report

REFERENCE: COMIREX Memorandum to C/PRD,  
10 February 1975

1. Thank you for your memorandum of 10 February 1975 concerning our post-mortem report on Cyprus. We very much appreciate comments from our readers and welcome the insights of those with perspectives different from our own.

2. We understand your general concern that some of our coverage will confuse readers who have not been initiated into the world of PHOTINT. But I doubt that many of our readers would misinterpret some of our remarks in the manner you fear.

--Thus, concerning your comment on paragraph 7 (p.5) of the Principal Findings section of the post mortem to the effect that readers would be confused by our description of the built-in and policy-imposed limitations of PHOTINT, we would argue that our general description is clear and succinct. Your suggested rewrite adds a level of detail, which itself might prove confusing or at least raise new questions. We simply ask the reader to take our word for it that, because of limitations of the system itself, and because of certain policy decisions, PHOTINT could not be a very active source during the crisis. Your expansion of this judgment refers to "a delay between satellite camera operations and the availability of film for exploitation," which, to us,

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would probably prompt the consumer to ask, "Why the delay?" And your reference to "manned reconnaissance systems" is, in fact, virtually duplicated in our text in paragraph 54 (p. 14).

--You find our paragraph 54 (p. 14) misleading when it states that "low priority was accorded photography of the Greek-Turkey-Cyprus area before the coup." You interpret this as a judgment that it should have been otherwise. Our feeling is that this is simply a flat statement of fact; we intended no judgment whatsoever. And we doubt very much that our consumers would advocate a high priority for this area (almost all of which belongs to two NATO allies) in normal times.

--We concede your next point--that the post-mortem report implies that there was something to be gained from reorienting the satellites, but that actually there was not--assuming, as you imply, that the images actually obtained could not have been improved significantly through reorientation.

--Reference our paragraph 54 (p. 14), we do not share your view that our assertion that film taken on 24 July was not available at NPIC until 29 July would lead readers to conclude that the community failed to recognize the importance of the film. Again, we simply intended to state the facts. Perhaps some readers would wonder about the delay, and perhaps we should have anticipated this with an explanation of it. And we certainly have no specific problems with your suggested rewrite of this paragraph. We'll try harder next time.

3. We're glad, though, that our principal conclusions in re PHOTINT appear to you to be sound. And please be assured that we did not intend to make any critical or confusing judgments about the role of PHOTINT in this (or any other) crisis.

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[Redacted]  
Chief, Product Review Division

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10 February 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

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Chief, Product Review Division  
Intelligence Community Staff

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SUBJECT : COMIREX Comments on Cyprus Post-Mortem Report

REFERENCE : USIB-D-15.2/127, January 1975.

1. The Cyprus Post-Mortem report quite justifiably gives little space to the contribution of photography during the crisis. At best, photography was a secondary source. Despite the limited value of imagery during the crisis, the two references in the report to photographic reconnaissance are imprecise and could mislead a reader who was not familiar with photographic reconnaissance systems and planning.

2. For example, in paragraph 7, page 5 the description of PHOTINT as not a "very active source" because of "built in limitations" and policy decision is at best confusing. A suggested re-write of the sentence follows: "Timely photography of the crisis area was not available because of the delay between satellite camera operations and the availability of film for exploitation and the policy decision not to use the more responsive manned reconnaissance systems."

3. Paragraph 54, page 14 is misleading. The statement that "low priority was accorded photography of the Greek-Turkey-Cyprus area before the coup" implies that it should have been otherwise. A photographic base in fact existed at the time of the coup and it had been obtained by "low priority" coverage. The paragraph contains other inaccuracies. For example, the implication that there was a need for, and something to be gained from, "reorienting" the [redacted] satellites that were on orbit in mid-July. These missions were nearing the end of their operational life at the time and it was possible to obtain

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imagery without orbit adjust. [ ] camera operations were conducted against the crisis-related targets on four revolutions between 17-21 July. [ ] operations were attempted 20-24 July. The [ ] was recovered on 21 July and the [ ] on 24 July.

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4. The last sentence of paragraph 54 states that the imagery taken on 24 July was not available until 29 July. A reader who did not

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the last sentence to indicate that the community did not recognize the importance of photography of the crisis area and was slow in handling it. This was not so.

5. The following re-write of paragraph 54 is suggested:

54. "Some base photography of the crisis area was available when the crisis broke out in mid-July. Two photographic satellites were in orbit at the time of the coup and attempts were made to obtain photography of the crisis area. Imagery taken during the period 17-24 July, however, was available to the photographic interpreters only after the required film recovery and development processes and it had little direct bearing on intelligence analysis of the crisis. Manned photographic reconnaissance of the crisis area was proscribed by national policy makers. Consequently, the photography that was available did little more than confirm the information already obtained [ ]"

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[ ]  
Chairman

Committee on Imagery Requirements and Exploitation

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